

British Columbia, as, in the meantime, an independent colony, has claims upon the Home Churches, not less direct than it has upon ourselves, commissioned Rev. J. M. King of Toronto, who is at present on a visit to Great Britain, to lay the claims of this colony before the proper committees of the Free Church, the United Presbyterian Church in Scotland, and the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, and to solicit their co-operation or aid in the work of supplying it with Gospel ordinances. The result of his appeals we have not yet learned.

Rev. Alex. Matheson has been labouring on faithfully during in the important field which he occupies at the Red River. During the year he has preached regularly on Sabbath forenoons at Little Britain, and in the afternoon at Kildonan, in the church of Rev. John Black, who by this arrangement is enabled to preach on alternate Sabbaths at Fort Garry and Fairfield. Towards the end of winter Mr. Matheson visited also the Presbyterians in the rising settlements on the Assiniboine. From two of these, viz., Portage La Prairie and High Bluff, the former of which is about sixty miles due west of Fort Garry, a petition signed by 37 names has come asking for the services of Rev. Alex. Matheson. Your Committee trust that, while it may not be found possible to send Mr. Matheson, some other faithful minister may soon be found to labour in this promising field.

The mission to the Red Indians at Prince Albert, on the Saskatchewan, has been prosecuted with zeal and success. The work done is, of course, chiefly of a preliminary kind, but it is of a highly satisfactory character, and argues well for the future of the mission. An English school has been commenced during the year under Mr. Adam McBeath, of whose qualifications for the work the highest testimonials have been given. This school is designed chiefly for the benefit of the children of the officers and servants of the H. B. & Co., and of the families residing in the neighbourhood of the Mission. It is satisfactory to know that this school has hitherto been chiefly self-sustaining. It may, however, be well worthy of consideration in view of the influence exerted by Europeans over the Indians in the interior, whether leave should not be granted to Mr. Nisbet to receive, at reduced rates, some of the children of those who may not be able to meet a scale of charges which may be necessary to make the school entirely self-supporting. Your Committee are of opinion that the expenditure of a small amount might, in this way, be most judiciously made. Instruction has also been given in the Cree language to six Indian children. During the period which has elapsed since Mr. Nisbet settled at Prince Albert, much of his time has been necessarily occupied in providing for the material wants of the mission, and he has had less opportunity of devoting himself to purely spiritual work than he will have hereafter. A farm had to be commenced and carried on, and suitable mission buildings erected. It is pleasing to note that the former, has been successful, and that the latter will soon be completed. In the working of the farm it is intended to make use, to some extent, of the Indian lads who may be sent to the Mission for education, who will in this way acquire such a knowledge of agriculture as will enable them hereafter to engage successfully in the tilling of the soil.

Every encouragement is given by Mr. Nisbet to the Indians to settle in the neighbourhood of the Mission and engage in farming, and the prospects are that during the present season a goodly number will make experiment of a settled mode of life. This will bring them habitually under the influence of the Mission, and remove the great barrier to missionary success presented by the wandering life and unsettled habits of the Indian tribes. Until this is accomplished, and even afterwards, it will be very desirable that means should be provided to enable the Mission to board and educate Indian children from a distance. It is estimated that by making their labour available on the farm, and practising the strictest economy, one Indian child can be trained at the Mission for the sum of fifty dollars per annum. Your Committee believe that if the attention of Sabbath Schools were directed to this department of missionary exertion, it would have the happiest results, both to those who give, and to those