

deep caverns. The highest parts of the ridges and peaks are only two or three hundred feet above the level of the lakes. These huge caverns began to fill with water and at last they found an outlet at the lowest point. They are kept filled now with rain, and the springs that are fed from the intervening rocks, and which rise in the depths of the lakes often. The lakes are emptying into each other, and draining eastward and an outlet at last to Lake Winnipeg through the Winnipeg River. There are between some of these lakes splendid water privileges, should anything more be found for water-power to do beside grinding granite. The depth of these lakes is diminishing. Water wears even granite and trap, and you can trace water marks on the rocks much higher than even water rises now. Some great barrier at or near the Winnipeg River must have given way recently, for the water mark is about five feet above the present line, and no one to whom I spoke ever saw the water within three and a half feet of the old line. That the fall is recent is proved by the fact that there is no lichen growing on the rock below that line while there is a thick coat above. I need scarcely mention that these lakes are full of delicious fish. On Saturday I passed down the line with Mr. Whitehead toward Rat Portage. At Mr. McDonald's cutting I had an opportunity of seeing the power of the new explosive, nitro-glycerine. The cutting was twenty-eight feet, and through hard granite. Eight or ten feet of the top was blasted out and lay farther down the face of the cut where the men were loading the rock on trucks. There was a hole drilled ten or twelve feet back from the face of the cut to a depth of nine feet, towards the north-west corner of the cut, but a few feet from the corner. This hole was filled with water to see if it was not leaky. It proved to be water-tight, and the man who had charge of the explosive poured five pounds of glycerine through a funnel into the hole from a tin pail he held. Nitro-glycerine is the mildest and the most innocent looking stuff one could think of. It resembles castor oil in appearance, as I saw it—at a distance I confess. The explosive being heavier than water it sank at once to the bottom of the hole and displaced the water, leaving however a quantity of water above it. We did not care to see it do its work and retired to a respectful distance. The man in charge fired it with electricity and there was a deafening report. We returned and found that the whole mass between the hole and the face of the cut was moved out and so broken that the derrick could load it on the trucks. To do this, the rock had to be torn along the north side twelve feet, the west eight or nine feet, and south side twelve feet, and by the bottom; and this was done to the bottom of the hole. For block blasting they use mica powder which is ordinary mica coated with glycerine. It resembles fish scales and is made up in cartridges to suit the size of the drill. For seamy rock they use the ordinary black powder. The rock is tilted up and most difficult to work in some places. I passed down the line below Rat Portage and called at Mr. Munro's camp, and Mr. McGillivray's camp. I tried to cross over to the tunnel from the west side but could not. There was no canoe on my side and I could make no one see or hear me on the other. Here the road crosses a large branch of the Winnipeg River. The width some one told me was 260 feet. There is a fall of four or five feet just where the road crosses; and above, and especially below, the rapids are most picturesque. Disappointed in not getting across and the associations of boyhood coming back with some vividness, I went up the stream a short distance and rolled a log into the water. It was soon carried over the falls but was soon caught in a wide eddy below and brought back again. It stole gradually in from the west side but was driven back by the waves from the fall. When the waves were not as watchful as they should have been, the log stole in to be tossed about for a time and then carried off by the current. This folly I repeated three times, and the log in each case had the same experience. The smooth, persistent eddy always gained on the fussy, frothy water of the fall. How I wished my children were with me to see the sport, although I might have felt ashamed that a minister of the Presbyterian Church should have been seen by any one else playing like a big boy. I retraced my steps to Rat Portage and called on Mr. Fellowes, the district engineer, and Mr. Jarvis, Mr. Whitehead's foreman there. Mr. F. sent a couple of men and a canoe with me across a bay which brought me near home. By nightfall I was in camp, meeting the Hon. D. McDonald of Toronto. Sabbath morning I

held service at headquarters. We had quite a large attendance. I arranged to preach there in the evening if the steamer did not leave before that time. I was canoeed down and

PREACHED AT RAT PORTAGE.

at 10 30 in a tent erected for the purpose, and to a good congregation. While at dinner at Mr. Lewis' camp we heard the boat whistle. I walked to the portage at once and ascertained that she would leave about 3 p.m. I must go out by her for my communion was the next Sabbath, and the meeting of the Presbytery on Wednesday. I got a boat and was rowed to Mr. McDonald's camp to hold service. Mr. Whitehead who was rowing down to the Portage promised to hold the boat for me. We had a very large and attentive audience. After service I made my way at once to the boat which waited a full half hour for me. We steamed out and went across half way to the North-west Angle and tied up for the night, as it is impossible to navigate the Lake of the Woods here but in daylight. I consulted Captain Malone and arranged to have service on the boat, which all attended. From the Captain, and all officers and men, I experienced great kindness. We got to the Angle Monday forenoon, and here I found a team detained for my benefit. We drove thirty-two miles that afternoon, and had a good early start next day. Meeting a buggy in the forenoon for which I telegraphed. I got home Tuesday night, making the 110 miles corduroy, muskeg, and all, in a day and a-half. I was thus in good time to report to Presbytery that met the following day. When out, I caused a subscription paper to be circulated, and I have been informed that \$70 per month has been subscribed for the support of a minister. This sum will be considerably increased. In addition Mr. Whitehead guarantees board and lodging. A large proportion of the men working on Section eighteen are young men who have been reared in agricultural districts of the other provinces. There are also a good number of miners from the neighborhood of Marquette, and from the Eastern States. The prevailing nationalities are

IRISH, SCOTCH, CANADIAN, FRENCH,

and Scandinavian. The men impressed me very favorably, and the great majority of them have been well brought up. To leave such a body of men without the means of grace would be a shame and sin, especially since they are willing to defray all expense. The effect of being deprived of the means of grace must prove disastrous to many in after years. Shall we not prevent such a calamity? When out there I reckoned up 610 men on section fifteen. We met a large gang at Rat Portage, another at the North-west Angle, and a third at Whitemouth. These would bring the number up to 700, and Mr. Whitehead expects that between 800 and 1000 will be employed there all winter. The work is not to be done in a short time. It must require years to cut this road through, and hence we ought to have a good man permanently employed there. If the next section is put under contract too, something should be done for it—I mean section sixteen. This is of the same character as section fifteen, only worse I understand. For a time the men suffered much owing to inferior accommodation and food. Things were new at first and organization difficult. Roads were almost impassable owing to the heavy rains, and plant and provisions could be sent out only with the greatest difficulty. This has all passed away. In all the camps I found good food. There was plenty of good flour, fresh beef, pork, beans, dried apples, tea, and sugar. They were erecting good comfortable camps too, and things will be much better for all parties. Section fifteen being in Keewatin,

NO LIQUOR IS ALLOWED TO BE SOLD

there, or even taken into the territory. In consequence of this there is no drunkenness. Riots among the men were unknown. I am sorry to say that there has been an attempt to take liquor in there, but the government acted promptly, and I think the men will have been arrested ere this. For the peace of that locality I hope this will be stamped out.

I have written you at length, and have no time to abbreviate or copy on different paper. You will excuse the length, and you are at liberty to do as you please with any information conveyed here. Let me urge you however to get a man at once and send him out. Prompt action in this case is much needed. The people with whom the minister must deal are peculiar, and he requires gifts for the work. Let him

if possible be a single man: he cannot keep a family there. Yours truly,

JAMES ROBERTSON.

Winnipeg.

NOTES FROM KINGSTON.

Kingston is one of the oldest settlements in Ontario its history reaching back considerably over a century to a time when on its shores might have been heard the echoes of the Indian's war whoop. It is situated at the head of the noble St. Lawrence River and is the county seat of Frontenac county. Kingston was incorporated in 1838, from which time it would appear to have entered on a prosperous career. The city is built on a limestone foundation, and, next to Quebec, it was regarded as the strongest military position in Canada. The population at present is about 17,000, and the city after remaining for some years in a rather stagnant state would now seem to be putting forth fresh signs of life, and in a short time will probably again run ahead of some of its more youthful competitors. About two years ago the principal portion of Princess street, which is the best business street, was destroyed by fire, and since this portion has been rebuilt, the improvements in that neighborhood are very noticeable. In addition to this the Street Railway Company, under the presidency of Mr. J. L. Morrison, are running street cars, which brings the outlying portion of the city into close proximity to the business thoroughfares.

THE PUBLIC BUILDINGS

are of a very superior class, being nearly all built of cut stone, and occupying good situations. They are at once a credit and an ornament to the city. Among them I may mention the City Hall, the Court House, the Penitentiary, the Post Office, the new Military College, which is now nearly completed, the Rockwood Asylum, and Queen's College. To visitors the Penitentiary is the most attractive. It covers nine acres of ground, and is built of cut stone, with massive gates and doors.

QUEEN'S COLLEGE

is the most important of the educational institutions of the city. This college, by virtue of a royal charter, has all the advantages of a university, and can confer degrees in arts, medicine and theology. Many of its students have taken honorable positions in the learned professions and in the Church. The Principal of the College was the very Rev. Wm. Snodgrass, D.D., who was also Professor of Theology, and who amid the regrets of the college and of the citizens of Kingston generally, has resigned this position and returned to Scotland to take charge of an important congregation there. The Rev. G. M. Grant of Halifax has accepted the position vacated by Dr. Snodgrass, and will bring to the discharge of his duties talent of a high order. The other professors are all men of mark in their several departments, and whilst there would seem to be more colleges than our people are supporting well, still it would be difficult to say which one we can best afford to lose.

THE PRESS

is respectably represented here by two live evening papers, which are ably conducted and well "got up," and which in their respective fields are exercising a healthful influence in the community generally, and judging from the improvements in their premises one would think that they are sharing largely in the prosperity of the city. The *News* which is published by Mr. James Shannon, is among the oldest papers in this Province, and has an extensive circulation. The alterations which have lately been made in the premises, make them capacious, comfortable and convenient, and will impart additional facilities for the execution of the work.

PRESBYTERIANISM

has a good footing here, there being three well equipped Churches.

ST. ANDREW'S,

which is the largest and much the oldest, was in connection with the Church of Scotland until the "Union." The church is a good substantial building, and has a good lecture hall adjoining which is used for Sabbath school purposes, and public lectures. There is also a good manse for the minister, and all are neatly enclosed with an iron fence. It was in this church that the late Rev. Dr. Machar preached, whose name is still fresh in the recollection of Kingstonians. The present pastor is the Rev. T. G. Smith, who is a graduate of "Queen's," and who was called from an important church in the State of Wisconsin, where he had