

## LETTER FROM REV. JAMES NISBET.

St. Cloud, Minnesota, August 15th, 1863.

The Rev. R. F. Burns, St. Catharines, C. W.

My Dear Brother—It was with great joy that Mr. Black and I received the intimation contained in a number of the "*Record*" some time ago, that the Committee of which you are Convener, were favourable to the establishment of a mission, for the exclusive benefit of the Indians in our North-West territories, and that volunteers for the work were called for from among our ministers and students. We had little doubt but that the Synod would take the same view of the subject, and that we would be called upon to enter immediately upon the work.

In these circumstances we both felt, that one of us ought (if possible) to go to Canada, and make the necessary arrangements and purchases, which could thus be more satisfactorily accomplished than by epistolary correspondence: and we were happy to learn, that although the mind of the Committee could not be obtained on the subject, you were yourself of the same opinion with us. Had circumstances permitted, my brother Mr. Black would have undertaken the duty; and I am sure the Synod would have been delighted with presence of one, who for twelve years has been its sole representative in the North-West; and he too, would have been glad to enjoy the privilege of meeting with the assembled brethren, a privilege which he has not even once enjoyed, since he was ordained to the sacred office.

You may be sure that both your missionaries feel disappointed at the result of the Synod's deliberations, although we are far from calling in question, the wisdom of its decision. We still venture to hope that the day is not far off, when such a mission will be established by our church, more especially as we know that there are some funds in the hands of the Treasurer, specially designed for this object.

If a few more of the members of our church, who have the ability, would send in special contributions, the object might soon be attained. I have received notice of a bequest of two hundred dollars to the Red River Mission, by a personal friend, who has been removed in the midst of his days and of his usefulness, as a member and office-bearer in one of our congregations. We are thankful for this evidence of interest in our work. May we not express the hope that others will follow this good example: while honouring the Lord with their substance during life and health, that they may also honour him when making a disposal of their worldly possessions, in the view of laying down the earthly tabernacle.

While pleading for the Indian population, we are not to be regarded as depreciating in the slightest degree, the work among our own brethren. On the contrary, the changes that are taking place indicate that we ought without delay, to increase our efforts in that direction.

The church is already aware that gold has been discovered in the valley of the Saskatchewan, and at other places on the east side of the Rocky Mountains; that mining has been commenced there this season with fair prospects of success; that some of the members of our Red River congregations are already there, and are anxious to have a minister among them; and that in all probability they will soon be joined by others from the west side of the mountains, and from other quarters. The church is also aware that a new company is now in possession of the Hudson's Bay territory, and that (judging by the prospectus) the policy of that company will be, to open up the country for settlement and for mining. Hence, no one can tell, to what extent the population of the Red River and the Saskatchewan villages may soon increase. The church should be prepared for the crisis. Give us at least one other missionary, that we may be enabled to visit the Saskatchewan at once, and that the work at the Red River settlement may not be hindered.

I was requested, while visiting Canada, to endeavour to procure some assistance towards the erection of a school house, at Kildonan (our principal station).