

some now coal mines, at which a large proportion of the miners and workmen are Presbyterians, that are like sheep without a shepherd, in the midst of adversaries. I have, during the past year, preached several times at some of these stations; and it was truly interesting to witness the audiences that attended on these occasions—audiences composed of seamen and other persons of various religious denominations, from different parts of the world, in addition to the comparatively more permanent residents.

"I further extended my tour to the north end of Cape Breton, to the extreme point of Cape North, and thence trended my course to its western side. This part of my travels was mostly accomplished on water. Having rounded, in an open boat, with an experienced crew, Cape Enfume, or Smoky, the highest and boldest headland in this province—its bluff, precipitous cliffs rising some 500 or 600 feet sheer and abrupt from the surging sea—we sailed northwards several miles, abeast a rugged, iron-bound coast, along which, for thirty miles or more, a few miserable, straggling fishermen's huts, perched among the rocks, are the only signs of civilization observable from the sea; whilst in the background is an extensive, dismal wilderness of barrens, swamps, rocks, hills, and forest. Judge, then, of our surprise and delight when, after a few hours' sailing along this inhospitable shore, there opened to the view a small creek, with a white sandy beach at its head, and a pebbled shore lining a tongue of land that jutted from it into the sea. Here we landed, among an interesting group of Gaelic-speaking fishermen who, during the three or four months of their residence there, are in the habit of meeting every Sabbath to sing, pray, and read (in Gaelic) the Scriptures, and such works as Boston's 'Fourfold State,' Alleine's 'Alarm,' Welsh's Sermons, &c.—They earnestly wished me to remain there that night, to preach to them—a request with which I cordially complied, and found them, as I expected, attentive and serious hearers. And so this spot, which is called Neil's Harbour, might, both physically and morally, be termed an oasis in a desert. The chief regret I experienced in leaving this and similarly situated settlements along this coast was, that I could not supply those poor, hardy fishermen with Gaelic copies of some such religious books as I have just named, for which they made frequent and urgent demands. The Gaelic editions of these works are published only in Scotland, and so cannot be procured here without being imported thence to this country. Many of our friends in Scotland might easily supply this want among us in Cape Breton, were they to hear of it.

"Fronting the Gulf of St. Lawrence, on the western flank of the Cape North Mountains, is a remote, outlying settlement, called Grand Tosh, which is most difficult of access, except by water. It consists, however, of about twenty-three families, all of whom are Presbyterian, with the exception of two or three who are Baptist. I was therefore determined to visit it, and so set out with a guide to accomplish that object. We had, at the outset of our journey, to wade a wide, rapid river; next, to climb the acclivities of a steep, forest-clad mountain, that stood 1500 feet, or upwards, above the level of the sea; and then, after trudging for six hours over a foot-path passing, for the most part, through the barrens and swamps, we found ourselves ensconced in this small but interesting settlement, where I remained a few days, and preached on a Sabbath in English and Gaelic. Here I met a good, zealous man, a native of the isle of Skye, who after several years' residence in Aberdeenshire, immigrated to this obscure corner, where he has ever since, during a period of upwards of twenty years, regularly conducted a Sabbath school, and thus has taught all the rising generation of the district to read the Scriptures.

"Such is a brief outline of some of my missionary labours during a part of the past year. The sphere of these imperfect operations has, it is true, much spiritual destitution and darkness, calling for new zeal, energy, and prayer on our part; yet there are visible some tokens that the Lord is blessing his work among us."