

A goodly number arrive by each steamer, *en route* for the gold regions. It is said that not less than 500 dwellings have been erected here since the great rush of last autumn. The style of these structures would amuse you — Most of them are run up in a few days, and need but little knowledge of carpentry. Conceive of a house, say, 25 by 30 feet. The sills 4 by 6 plates 3 by 4, studs 2 by 3, corner posts, &c., 3 by 4, rafters, &c., of proportionate size. Studs nailed at foot and top, without framing. An inch board let into the studs to receive ceiling joists which are laid on and secured by a nail at each end, (sometimes) partition studs $1\frac{1}{2}$ or 2 by 3, and you have the frame ready. This is enclosed with boards, or clapboarding, rarely if ever with both. Some are enclosed with boards and battens upright, nailed to the sill and plate, occasionally with a diagonal stud brace. In this style, the studding in the frame is dispensed with. Then, instead of lath and plaster partitions and ceiling, factory cotton is tightly stretched, and tacked to the studs or wall boards, as the case may be, and to the ceiling joists, and the whole is covered with wall-papering. If you can put this before your mind, you have the truthful plan and specification of the majority of our recently-constructed houses. What will be the consequences of the March winds, which the old settlers tell us will approach to the character of hurricanes, I know not; but I can calculate with tolerable certainty upon the rapidity and the irresistibility of a conflagration. I have thought sometimes that to sleep in such flame conductors, renders peculiarly appropriate the combination of two deprecated evils in the petitions of the Litany, "From fire and sudden death," &c.

I must, however, confine myself to other topics. I assure you that I have never before felt myself pressed by such weighty responsibility, as during the last ten days. Our expenses hitherto will be seen by the appended account. Board could not be obtained here for less than 9 or 10 dollars each per week. Providentially, Mr. Pidwell was able to make room for us all, and we are living with him and his son, making the expenditure a joint stock affair. I know not

yet what the cost per week will be, but you will assume it to be somewhat startling when you look at the following market prices. * * * Everything proportionate, with the probability of increased price if there shall be any sudden influx of population. I have seen a house in course of completion that may do for my own family when we separate for our respective fields of labour, the rental of which is to be \$25 per month. I say nothing of its merits as compared with ordinary country parsonages in Canada. Happy are the wives of many brethren there who crave additional conveniences! And our dear wives are happy *here*, and live in hope of better days, when time and the manifest kindness of our friends and neighbors shall effect their work.

Another source of anxiety is the necessity for the immediate erection of a respectable and commodious Church. We occupy the present room by sufferance, and the public service may require our abandonment of it any day. Immediately on arrival I made enquiry as to the probability of our obtaining a grant of land in the town for church and parsonage premises, and learned that there are no lots at the disposal of the Government. The entire plot on which the town stands, and for a considerable distance around it, was conveyed by the Crown some time ago to the Hudson's Bay Company. In July last the Company threw all the lots into market at \$50 each per lot of 60 x 120 feet, leaving no reservation for churches or other purposes. Lots then, having been bought by speculators, went up to fabulous prices, say from \$2,000 to \$5,000. Some reaction has taken place, and I have this morning ascertained that a site has been offered to Mr. Pidwell for us at \$1500. Of this, one third is required down, and the balance in a few months.

Should my application for a grant be unfavorable, I see no course open but to purchase ground, and then obtain what we can by subscription, and proceed at once to build. If we purchase, I shall be obliged to draw upon you for funds, and shall in the meantime, make my appeal to friends in Canada for contributions to a building fund for the Missions here.

It is my intention also, as early as