

WESLEYAN MISSIONARY NOTICES,

FEBRUARY 1st, 1871.

SASKATCHEWAN DISTRICT.

VICTORIA.

“THE pestilence that walketh in darkness, and destroyeth at noon day” has swept over the broad and fertile plains of the great Saskatchewan, not overlooking the settlement of Victoria, where many have been “obedient to the faith,” and many also have died happy in the Lord. We bespeak attention to the following letters from the Rev. G. McDougall, and then we are sure of the churches’ sympathies, and the churches’ prayers. Rarely has it been our lot to present such instances of deep affliction, combined with such Christian fortitude and heroism. May God comfort the bereaved mourners!

Letter from the Rev. G. McDougall, dated Victoria, Oct. 21st, 1870.

As there will be no other chance for writing until winter expires, I send this on to Carlton, hoping it may reach you.

Since I last wrote, the harrowing scenes we have passed through cannot be detailed. Small-pox has swept away hundreds. To relieve the sufferers, and seek to lighten the sorrows of the bereaved, has been our work. Of all men, the ignorant, destitute red man is the most wretched when a strange disease appears amongst them: many have died alone and unattended. Not a few have sought relief by plunging into the river; and multitudes who recovered from the disease have perished from destitution. We have sought, by every means in our power, to stop the spread of this great destroyer; and with deep gratitude I record the fact, that, up to the present date, not one of the old settlers of White Fish Lake or Victoria have died of small-pox. Our trouble has been with the poor Plain Crees who fled to the Mission in their distress. Many of these have died within sight of our door; and yet my own family, which, including adopted children,

numbers nineteen souls; have hitherto escaped. To God alone be all the praise!

Never was the arrogance and bigotry of Popery more manifest. Having taught their deluded followers to look to them as to a god, when the scourge first appeared they collected their people into large camps: the bodies of the dead, the infected, and the well, were all collected in the Church. The spiritual power of the Priest proclaimed the grand specific, but all has failed. At their Mission, 10 miles from Edmonton, upwards of 100 have died, mostly French half-breeds; while numbers of the same people have died on the Plains.

My son has gone with the Victoria Camp to the Plains. Our people must have provisions. Bro. Steinhaur is out with his people. I enclose you a note written the day he started. Brother Campbell was here last week; my son and he have arranged (D.V.) to start on a visit to the Mountain Stoneys, the first snow. Our poor Stoneys! I fear most of them are gone. So great has been the mortality amongst these Western tribes in the last eight years, that