

MISSION FIELD.

Death of a Missionary.

Mr. Donald H. McVicar died on the 20th May, at the Crowstand, near Fort Pelly in the North-west Territories. He was a Cree Indian, a grandson of old Chief Mistawasis who passed away a few months ago, and in childhood he was given into the care of the Rev. James Nesbet to be educated as a ward of the Presbyterian Church. On his adoption he received the name of the Principal of Montreal College who was then as now a member of the Foreign Mission Committee. He proved himself to be a student of much more than average powers, and when he graduated in Arts he carried off the silver medal in Natural Science the highest distinction in his class. Three years afterwards, in 1887, he completed his course in theology, was licensed and entered upon Indian Mission work as teacher and interpreter at the mission where he has spent his last days. He was never ordained. There was in his nature a reticence and absence of aggressiveness, especially in the way of taking the lead among his own people, which in his opinion disqualified him for any position more responsible than that of teacher or interpreter which positions he filled with great conscientiousness and no little success. He served the Church successively at Okanasa, File Hills, Mistawasis and for the last two years at the Crowstand where he had begun his work and where a year or so after graduation he had married his Indian wife. In his student days he had a remarkably sound and vigorous constitution and was distinguished for his excellence in athletic exercises especially such as running and snow-shoeing, no less than for his high place in the class-list, but about a year ago symptoms of that dread of the Indians—consumption—began to manifest themselves. He understood the danger and although both the local doctor and the members of the mission staff did what they could for him its course was not long and he has been taken away.

The Rev. C. W. Whyte, the missionary, in communicating the news of his death, says "His mind wandered a good deal during the last few days. The first time I went to see him after he got worse, he had his bible open at John xiv. He asked me to read the 23rd Psalm. He spoke about going to Winnipeg to see the doctors there, then he wandered off to talk about his work, etc. His death is a great loss to us and it is a great personal loss to me. The more I knew him, the more I liked him. He was generally quiet and reticent but often he would talk very freely. He was kind and true and considering the Indian influences that were always about him, he lived on a high plane. He was most conscientious in his work here, especially the interpreting. I shall not forget how painstaking he was in the work of translation you gave him. That work was a great pleasure to him."

This translating to which Mr. Whyte refers is a version of St. Luke's Gospel in Cree which Mr. McVicar made at the request of the Winnipeg Foreign Mission Committee. He made it directly from the Greek, but with the aid of all the critical appliances he could reach and did it with the greatest pains. When completed it was submitted to the Rev. Hugh McKay of our own Church, and to the Rev. John McDougall and E. R. Steinhauer of the Methodist Church, of whom the two latter have spoken Cree all their lives. These unite in pronouncing the translation accurate, idiomatic and excellent. This translation is now being printed. The Winnipeg Committee had a plan of having the whole Bible done into the language of the Crees of the Plains with the help of the British and Foreign Bible Society, but its unique agent has been carried off in the prime of his powers.

Conditions and Results in Korea..

BY REV. GEORGE HEDER JONES, SEOUL, KOREA.

Geographically, Korea extends from 32° to 42° north latitude, and has about the same number of degrees expansion in longitude. The climate is equable, and the country lies between two warm ocean currents. Korea consists of 100,000 square miles, and is as mountainous as Switzerland. The origin of the people is wrapped in obscurity, but they probably came from India. The people are about five feet five inches in height, and manifest less of the Mongolian features than the Chinese or Japanese.

These Koreans live in mud huts, straw-thatched, with rooms about eight feet square and five to six feet in height. It is a peculiar thing to say, but, nevertheless, it is a fact, that the Korean sleeps over the fire. The rooms are constructed so that an intricate system of flues runs over the floor. Over the flues are laid flags of stone, on top of which mud is plastered, and over the whole a heavy thick oiled paper is pasted. The fire by which the meal is cooked is conducted into these flues, and on top of this the Korean sleeps. The people are agricultural, the great mass of them being occupied in rice culture.

The position of woman is far from a desirable one. The heel of heathenism rests heavily indeed on the neck of man, but it rests infinitely more heavily on the neck of woman. She is taught in childhood that she must hold herself subservient to her father's will, in wifehood to her husband's will, in widowhood to that of the oldest son. Christianity comes with a welcome and delightful emancipation for her.

It was God, not man, who held out any promise of success in Korea to the Church when she entered upon her work there in 1895. To human vision the difficulties appeared so enormous and the conditions and views of the people so completely petrified, it was not only folly to attempt work there; it was a waste of energy greatly needed elsewhere. The results in the peninsula to-day prove how unfounded was such an assumption. There, as everywhere, it is true that man's distress and helplessness was God's opportunity.

A word as to the conditions which existed in Korea when Protestant Christianity first began its work:

1. Christianity was in a very ill odor with the Koreans at that time. Within the memory of most of those living a mighty persecution had taken place, by which over 10,000 Koreans, converts to the Roman Catholic Church, were cruelly massacred. What the people knew of Christianity was calculated to do anything but impress them favorably with it. But not only was Christianity an ill odor, but all foreigners were regarded with suspicion. To a certain degree this feeling had been allayed by the conduct of Admiral Schufeldt when the American treaty was negotiated and by the negotiation of treaties with Korea by the various foreign powers.

In 1885, when the first missionaries went there, however, so little was known about foreigners that the old views largely held sway.

2. The second great obstacle was the utter lack of any familiarity with the field to which the first missionaries were appointed. Korea was truly an unknown land and its people strangers. There is little doubt that of equal importance with a knowledge of the language is a knowledge of the people to which the missionary is sent, and the missionaries in Korea had to acquire this knowledge by slow and often disappointing and grievous experiences. The field was truly a virgin one.

What have these ten years brought forth?

1. The first result, which is certainly entitled to be enshrined as the chief after ten years of work in Korea, is the conquest of the prejudice of the people. This has been accomplished to an extent which transcends the wildest expectations of the first missionaries when they began their work in the field. Much of this work may be said to have been done within the last three years. About that time the writer was called to a village on a populous island to baptize an old woman. When he arrived at the shore he was met with the message that the villagers would destroy the home of the Christian residing there if he introduced a foreign missionary into that hamlet. So the baptism took place in a boat at the seashore at midnight. In less than three years from that time a thriving church grew up in that very hamlet. This is illustrative to a considerable degree of the great change in sentiment which has taken place in many centres in Korea.

2. The second great result has been the mastering of the language. The Korean tongue has been studied, grammars written, dictionaries compiled, and treatises published, which greatly simplify the task of future missionaries in learning the language; but, above all, the people have been given in their own tongue the blessed Word of God and taught to sing His praise in their own language.

3. The work itself has been organized along wide, far-reaching and permanent lines. Schools have been founded for the enlightenment of the people. Educational work carried on by the missionaries is regarded with respect by the people, and their importance greatly enhanced thereby. Hospitals have been opened for the relief of the distressed and the gratitude of thousands won by the cures effected. Permanent work in preaching and evangelizing the people has been opened at about forty different places throughout the nine provinces, and the number of people identified as members and probationers with the Church reaches over 1100. During 1895 these native Christians gave on an average about \$1 apiece to the work of the Church in Korea. The beginnings of a native ministry now gladden our hearts. Young Koreans are following the divine call to preach the Gospel to their people. Some are in our educational institutions preparing for that purpose. Others are employed as helpers and colporteurs, while a few, without any pay or emolument of any kind, are preaching the Gospel to their people and doing a good work for their Master.