

OUR INDIAN MISSIONS.

MISSIONS TO THE INDIANS.

MISTAWASIS.

The Rev. John McKay, of the Mistawasis Mission, has taken advantage of the opening of the railway to Prince Albert to pay a visit to Winnipeg with his daughter, Miss C. B. McKay. Since Mr. McKay's written reports of his work are usually very brief, confined indeed mainly to categorical answers to the questions annually asked, advantage has been taken of the opportunity to secure, by a personal interview, a fuller account of the Mission under his charge than has recently been given. It is twenty-four years since Mr. McKay entered on the work of our Prince Albert Mission, as interpreter for the Rev. James Nisbet, but it is only twelve years ago since, principally through the influence the Rev. Dr. Black, of Kildonan, he was ordained to the ministry. He was thus among the first of the little band of native preachers who gave themselves to the work of evangelizing their countrymen, and whose bead-roll contains the name of George Flett, Solomon Tunkansuiciye, Cuthbert McKay and Donald H. McVicar. When the attractions of the Prince Albert Mission became known white men crowded in, and the Indians retired to a reserve on the Snake Plains, 75 miles distant. Mr. McKay followed them, and has been their missionary ever since. The modest building which served as a church at first, became in course of time too small, and two years ago a larger and more comfortable church was erected, which Mr. McKay and occasional visitors tell us, is well filled at morning and afternoon services on the Sabbath Day, and which numbers on its communion roll fifty-six members, all of whom spent their early years—many of them till adult age—in heathenism. Abundant evidence as this is of success, it represents but a part of the missionary's work. Indians from the far north, on their way to Prince Albert, often spend a few days at the halting place in the wilderness, which the reserve offers, and not a few of them hear for the first time the Word of Life from Mr. McKay's lips.

The day school has been under the patient and sympathetic care of Miss McKay ever since the Mission was established, nine years ago. For the last quarter it has had an average attendance of twenty, which, considering the scattered location and nomadic habits of the Indians, may be regarded as very good, and especially when it is remembered that this is for the quarter ending with September, the quarter, that is, when the Saskatchewan woods and prairies abound in all kinds of berries, and when going to school is quite intolerable even to a boy who has not the Indian's love of thicket and river bank. *La Grippe* was epidemic on the reserve last winter, and interfered seriously with the work of the school, but Miss McKay, not to be beaten when the price to be paid for victory was merely her own ease, took no holiday this summer, and