

derness, and to push still further the frontiers of civilization, carry him also beyond the privileges of the sanctuary and the influence of the Gospel. When the six days' strenuous toil is ended, and the blessed Sabbath's rest has come, his thoughts turn fondly to the home of his childhood and the Christian companionship of other days, and the dark and gloomy forest seems more sombre for that it is uncheered by the sound of the church-going bell, or by the Christian hymn of praise. The hardy frontier man generally has, at first, all that he can do to procure food for himself and his family, to get a roof over their heads, to fell the forest, plough the glebe, and cultivate the acres rescued from the wilderness. He cannot himself procure those Gospel ordinances to which he may have been accustomed in older settlements; and sometimes even his dead are laid in the grave without those solemn rites of religion which do so much to mitigate the bitterness of parting.

PIONEER MISSIONARIES.

But he is not long left without the gospel. Wherever the ring of the woodman's axe or the crack of the hunter's rifle is heard, there the Methodist missionary soon follows as the almoner of the Church, breaking the bread of life to those who are perishing for lack of knowledge—sharing the hardships and privations of the people among whom he labours, partaking of their often coarse and scanty fare, sympathising with their sorrows, and rejoicing with them in their simple joys. He thus helps to lay broad and deep the foundations of a Christian civilization on those eternal principles of righteousness and truth which alone are the corner-stone of national greatness, the pledge of the stability of national institutions.

It has been said that he is the benefactor of his race who makes two blades of grass to grow where but one grew before. If this be so, how great a benefactor of mankind is he who subdues the immemorial forest, and converts it into a cultivated farm. He adds to the wealth of the universe, cheapens bread for God's great family of the poor throughout the world, and is the advance guard of the great army of civilization.

RESULTS OF MISSIONS.

Where but yesterday, as it seems, the solitude was disturbed only by the gliding of the Indian's light canoe, or the melancholy cry of the water-fowl, to-day the stately steamer, swan-like, breasts the waves, and the busy hum of industry makes vocal all the air. Where the hurdling of the hunter's arrow startled the red-deer feeding in the forest glade, the shriek of the iron horse now awakes the echoes far and wide. Where, within the memory of men now living, the only human habitation was the Indian wigwam, now rise noble cities with crowded populations, and adorned with stately architecture. The keeping pace with these enormous strides will tax to the uttermost the missionary energies of our Church. But in consequence of this rapid development the remote mission station soon becomes a new source and centre of missionary effort; like the banyan-tree extending its branches, which in time take root in the earth, and become themselves parent stems. Thus it is the truest economy to liberally sustain

these domestic missions during the period of their dependence, at the same time teaching the principles of self-reliance, and awaking the ambition to become in turn contributors to the missionary revenue, and to repay with usury the help they have themselves received.

OUR INDIAN MISSIONS.

In the library of the Harvard University, near Boston, is an old and faded volume, which possesses a profound and pathetic interest. No man can read its pages. In all the world there is none who comprehends its mysterious characters. It is a sealed book, whose voice is silent forever. Yet its language was once the vernacular of a numerous and powerful race. But of those who spoke that tongue there runs no drop of kindred blood in any human veins. It is the Bible translated for the use of the New England Indians by Eliot, the great apostle of the native tribes.

This worn and meagre volume, with its speechless pages, is the symbol of a mighty fact. It is the only vestige of a vanished race, the tombstone over the grave of a nation. And similar to the fate of the New England tribes seems to be the destiny of the entire aboriginal race on this continent. They are melting away like snow before the summer's sun.* Their inherent character is averse to the genius of modern civilization. You cannot mew up the eagle of the mountain like the barnyard fowl, nor tame the forest stag like the stalled ox. So, to the red man the trammels and fetters of civilized life are often irksome and chafe his very soul. Like the caged eagle, he pines for the freedom in the forest or the prairie. He now stalks a stranger through the heritage of his fathers, an object of idle curiosity, where once he was lord of the soil. He dwells not in our cities. He assimilates not with our habits. Like a spectre of the past, he lingers among us in scattered "reserves," or hovers upon the frontier of civilization, ever pushed back by its advancing tide. Already the arrow-heads and tomahawks of the native tribes are collected in our museums as strange relics of a bygone era.

OUR DUTY TO THE INDIANS.

Now, we who possess their lands owe a duty to this ancient race. The original occupants of the soil have inalienable rights, conferred by the Lord of all the earth, which no man may innocently ignore or deny. Not that it is for a moment conceivable as the will of Providence that these broad lands, already the homes of millions, and prospectively of millions more, should forever continue the hunting-ground of the wandering children of the forest.† We believe every supplanting of a weaker by a stronger race to be a step towards a higher and nobler human development. But the right of conquest does not free from

* "Sixteen millions of aborigines in North America," says Dr. J. C. Nott, "have dwindled down to two millions since the *Mayflower* discharged on Plymouth Rock." The race is running out, he adds, "like sand in Time's hourglass."—*Types of Mankind*, p. 409.

† "It is estimated that in a forest country each hunter requires an area of not less than 50,000 acres for his support."—Sir John Lubbock's *Prehistoric Times*, p. 281. Under skilful agriculture a single acre will more than support a man.

obligation to the conquered. We in Canada are in the position of wardens to those weaker races. They look up to our beloved sovereign as their "Great Mother." We are their elder and stronger brethren, their natural protectors and guardians. How have the duties springing from that relationship been discharged? The Government, it is true, has exercised a paternal care over the scattered fragments of these once numerous tribes. It has, where practicable, gathered them into reserves, bestowed annual gifts and pensions, and kept them in a state of tutelage, which, however, has enervated their moral fibre. But the influence of the white man's civilization has been more a bane than a blessing. His vices have taken root more deeply than his virtues. His accursed fire-water has swept away its thousands and demoralized whole tribes, and the diseases he has introduced have threatened the extermination of the entire race.

PAGAN TRIBES.

Many of these tribes are still pagan. They worship the Great Manitou and sacrifice the white dog. They are ruled by cunning medicine men and are the prey of superstitious fears. Others give an unintelligent observance to the mummeries of a corrupt form of Christianity, and regard the Cross only as a more potent fetish than their ancestral totem. Romish missionaries, indeed, have been indefatigable for three centuries in their propagandist zeal. No more thrilling records exist than those of the heroic lives and martyr deaths of many of the pioneer Jesuit fathers, who taught the blended worship of the Virgin Mother and Divine Son to savage tribes beside strange streams and amid remote and pathless forests. The footsteps of these pious adventurers may be traced all over this continent, in the names of saint or martyr given to the great natural features of the landscape all the way from the mouth of the St. Lawrence to the mouth of the Mississippi.

Her Indian missions have been one of the chief glories of Canadian Methodism, and of all the Protestant agencies among the native races, hers have been the most successful. She has now forty missions, employing twenty-seven missionaries, seventeen interpreters, forty teachers, and six local assistants, or a total paid agency of eighty-six. There are no more difficult mission fields in the world than those of the "Great Lone Land" of the North-West. The devoted servant of the Cross, unlike the missionary to India, China, or Japan, goes forth to a region almost beyond the pale of civilization. His social isolation is sometimes almost appalling. Communication with the world is maintained only by infrequent and irregular mails, conveyed by long and tortuous canoe routes in summer, or on dog-sleds in winter. He is exposed to the rigours of an almost arctic climate, and often suffers privation of the very necessities of life. The unvarnished tales of some of our own missionaries lack no feature of heroic daring and of apostolic zeal. In mid-winter the intrepid missionary made a journey of several hundreds of miles on a dog-sled, sleeping in the snow with the thermometer many degrees below zero, in order to open a new mission among a pagan tribe. Yet one devoted

brother writes: "I think this is the best mission in the world." Few records of self-sacrifice are more sublime than that of our missionary band at Edmonton House, on the Saskatchewan, ministering with Christ-like tenderness and pity to the victims of that loathsome scourge, the small-pox. And few pictures of bereavement are more pathetic than that of the survivors, themselves enfeebled through disease, laying in their far-off, lonely graves their loved ones who fell martyrs to their pious zeal. For these plumeless heroes of the Christian chivalry all human praise is cold and meagre; but the "well done" of the Lord they loved is their exceeding great reward.

MISSIONARY TRIUMPHS.

The influence of our missions has largely been felt in the improved social and moral condition of the Indian tribes, among whom have been won some of the most remarkable trophies of Divine grace. Many pagan savages have been reclaimed from lives of sin to become the disciples of Jesus, and have adorned by their consistent walk the doctrines of the Gospel. Many, by their talents, love of souls, and zeal for the welfare of their people, have done much to benefit and bless their race. But while much has been accomplished, much yet remains to be done. Multitudes are yet wandering blindly on to an unknown future, uncheered by any hope of heaven. Shall they go down to darkness and to death unilluminated by the blessed light of the Gospel of Salvation? As men of our race have taught them to eat of the bitter fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, be it ours to lead them to the tree of life, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations. As we have taken possession of their ancient inheritance, let us point them to a more enduring country, an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, fairer fields and lovelier plains than even the fabled hunting-grounds of their fathers in the spirit-land.

A LITTLE WAIF.

A MAN passing up State Street, one chilly day, saw a bare-footed girl trotting along on the cold pavement.

"Where are your shoes, little girl?" said the gentleman.

"Don't dot any," said she.

"Don't dot any? Why not?" said he.

"My papa dets drunk," said the poor little waif.

That tells the whole story. Bare feet, ragged clothing, hunger, want, poverty, and misery, all come when "papa dets drunk." And tens of thousands are beginning to taste the deadly cup that brings all this misery at the end; and others are dealing out this dreadful deadly poison to poor degraded men.—*The Little Christian*.

DID you ever think the world is always within a year of starvation? The stock of food on hand at any time is only a part of the last year's crop. The stock of wool from which the present warm clothing was made was mainly raised last year; and last year's crop of cotton is nearly all gone. The world does not lay up much in store.

OPPORTUNITY is rare, and a wise man will never let it go by.