

have learnt how to till the ground, we cut off their former and only means of support, viz., the chase. True, some settlements, like that at Negwenenang, may be fortunate enough to be within reach of prolific fishing grounds, where salmon-trout and whitefish may be found in abundance, but (1) only one month in the year produces them in any quantity, and the Indian, among his other characteristics, have very little idea of providing for the future, preferring a kind of hand-to-mouth life. (2) The fisheries are a very precarious dependence, failing altogether, as they do occasionally, and starvation is staring the Indians in the face, unless the mission is prepared to feed them, and this is no easy matter, in view of their immense "capacity", as may be judged from the consumption of provisions by twelve Indians during the six days occupied in transporting a portion of Mr. Renison's supplies from Red Rock to the Mission, viz., 1½ barrels of flour, 125 lbs of pork, 10 lbs of tea, 25 lbs of sugar, and 2 bags of potatoes. The "Department of the Interior" is therefore, no small factor in the Indian question, and as shown on a larger scale by the late rebellion, the "Minister," whether of Church or State, must make some provision for it. Just here, however, lies one of the many grave difficulties attending our missionary work viz., the danger of fostering the mercenary spirit, and seeming to purchase their adhesion to the faith for the sake of "the loaves and fishes." Not indeed that they own to the impeachment. Their version of the matter is a much more charitable one. "The great Father sent you, you say, to care for our souls, but we and our children are hungry, does He not care for our bodies?" And with this logic of nature we must be content, waiting patiently till their ability to support themselves relieves us of all further risk of a misconception of our motives.

Fourthly—Growth in our Indian Mission is some times hindered by difficulty and opposition from without. But one or two new converts have been added to the settlement at Negwenenang since its first establishment. This has not been owing to any scantiness of material, still less to any remissness on the Missionary's part. Among all the labourers in the Indian field who are bearing the burden and heat of the day, nowhere can one be found more indefatigable or self-denying in his efforts to bring the blessed light of the Gospel to those who are "sitting in darkness and shadow of death." But toil as he may, let the following narrative taken from his own lips illustrate one form of difficulty with which he has to contend: "Last summer said Mr. R., a message was brought to me that the Pagan Indians at Neepigon Post, about forty miles off, were anxious that I should visit them. Interpreting their message as a call from God, I made my preparations and started on the 29th of July, accompanied by Mitchell and his son John. We reached our destination by August first. The Pagans received us kindly. I spent two days among them, instructed them as fully as was possible, and baptised a number who expressed their desire to become Christians; among them was one woman of very diminutive stature humped-backed, and carrying a child in her arms, who, while the instruction

was going on, separated herself from the others, and went down towards the edge of the lake, evidently anxious to get me to follow her. On doing so, and questioning her, she said that she had been a bad woman, and had done many wicked things. Long ago, when she was young, she had a vision, which had troubled her all her life, and made her afraid, and unless this fear could be taken away, and her sins forgiven she did not want to be baptized. I told her the goodness of the Gospel of Christ more fully and afterwards admitted her to His fold. Shortly after I returned to the Mission, accompanied by Medawenene and his two sons, and a son of Penawenene, who were anxious to see for themselves and the rest of the band what the lands and houses at Negwenenang were like. On my arrival I surveyed three lots for three families. Our visitors having made their observations, set out on their return, with the intention of coming back, and building their houses this fall. Michael and his son went with them, taking a canoe large enough for the whole party, and a supply of flour, pork and tea. P. and his family set out in this canoe, but had scarcely covered three miles of the journey when they were overtaken by——— and——— who told them that the Missionary only wanted to kidnap the children, and threatened Michael with bodily violence if he attempted to take them away. This frightened the poor Pagans, and they abandoned the idea of joining the Mission. The others were also told that if they joined us they could never again obtain anything from the store. Michael returned in twenty days, disappointed in his errand nothing being left of the supplies, which had cost about thirty dollars.

Such is the plain, unvarnished story of our Neepigon mission, its present condition, and the difficulties that hinder its progress. But, "none of these things move" us, save to greater faith, and a more unflinching perseverance. "With God nothing is impossible." Even in the apparently disappointing results of Mr. Renison's visit to those poor pagans, there is this much to encourage us, that the good seed must have found lodgment in some of those who listened to it. It cannot, all of it have been "as water spilled upon the ground." Even in consciences as ignorant, and minds as dark and degraded as theirs— and from what we heard of some of their habits, a deeper degradation could hardly be conceived— there must have been something in the Gospel they heard to appeal to any lingering remnant of religious instinct that still remained in them; and if so a beginning has been made. And that for the present suffices. Sooner or later— and if later, still soon enough for God's purpose— the tiny seed will germinate, and we shall see, as a thousand times already elsewhere "first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." Meanwhile our very confidence in the divine promise forbids any slackening on our part. The words which Elaot, the apostle of the Red Indians, inscribed at the end of his own Indian Grammar, may well furnish our motto:

"Prayer and pains, through faith in Jesus Christ, will do anything."