

men wear leggings, which are often ornamented with beads. The women wear dresses that come down below the knees (but would not admit of crinoline) and beaded leggings. Their shoes are made of soft moose leather, prepared by themselves, and are often covered on the top with bead work. For an upper covering, both men and women wear blankets, sometimes a dressed buffalo robe or moose skin. Very often the poorer sort are very ill clad. They live in leather tents, made usually of buffalo skins, sometimes of moose skins; from six to fifteen skins go to a tent. A fifteen skin tent was my house for more than three months after coming here, but we are now living in two small houses, and we hope to have a better one built next summer.

Very few Indians of this territory have as yet been prevailed upon to build houses and settle on the land. The Indian settlement at Red River is almost the only example of this kind. Some of them hereabout cultivate small patches of potatoes, but they do not live at their little fields, but only visit them for planting, hoeing, and digging.

The Episcopal and the Wesleyan churches have some missions in the territory; but, compared with the extent of the country, these are few indeed. The great majority of the Indians are nothing but wandering savages still; and it is our desire to bring some of them to the knowledge of the gospel—the blessings of which you all enjoy so fully.

I have seen many bright boys and girls among the children, who, but for their dirty faces, would look very well. I earnestly hope we may be able to induce a number of these to come to school when we get accommodation made for them. I am sure some of them would make clever men and women if they were taught, and could be delivered from the wandering, and somewhat idle habits of their race. I hope you will always take an interest in this work, and I know that your worthy superintendent can tell you of several ways by which you can help us. By your sabbath school missionary boxes you can do much, but your little fingers might also be busy for us at spare times. Any sort of clothing is as good as money here. Some of the little girls at Red River made up a nice contribution of socks and stockings for the mission before we left the settlement—all knitted by their own little fingers—and I know that many of you, and the young people of many sabbath schools, could do something of the kind for us. I have two services every sabbath, when the Indian language is generally used, and I also hear a few little children repeat their questions. We have also a prayer meeting every Wednesday evening. At these services we always remember the christian people who have sent us here, and the sabbath schools that help on the work by their contributions and their prayers.

We are here a very few in a great wilderness, with no white people within sixty miles of us; but plenty of work keeps us from thinking the time long; still we often think of the happy times we had in Canada, or the Red River settlement, and we wonder if the time will come in this place when we shall enjoy the society of christian friends as we did in those. Let us hope and pray that we may, before long, have many christian Indians settled around us, and that will afford us more joy than all the comforts we have left ever did.

I wish you much joy, comfort, and prosperity, during the year on which we have entered. I shall be happy to hear from you from time to time; and I shall not think it a task to write you an occasional letter, as I may have opportunity.

My dear young friends,
Yours most sincerely,

JAMES NISBET.

“ PRESBYTERIAN MISSION,
Prince Albert, Saskatchewan,
18th January, 1867.