

OUR CONTRIBUTORS.

A TRIP TO THE MARITIME PROVINCES.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

The completion of Confederation and the building of the Intercolonial Railway have gradually brought the Maritime and upper Provinces into close proximity, so that business men in the west think no more at present of going to the sea provinces than they do of a trip to Montreal or Quebec, and as it is in mercantile and commercial business so is it in ecclesiastical matters, since the union of the different branches of the great Presbyterian family, the Church is looked upon as a whole, from the prairie plains of the great North-West to the rock-bound shores of the Atlantic. In a former paper I gave you a few imperfect particulars of some of our congregations in the cities of the Maritime Provinces, and with your permission I will give you a few particulars of the rural congregations, which, in the course of a short business tour, I visited.

The line of railway from Toronto to Quebec has been so often described that your western readers are as familiar with it as they are with the streets of Toronto. Leaving Quebec the railway passes through a rather poor district of country, inhabited principally by French, or as they are called in the locality "Canadiens." The land is poor, the farms are small, and the system of farming would seem to be of the lowest type. After passing Campbellton, N.B., the railway skirts Bay Chaleur until it reaches Bathurst, N.B., when it leaves the water and runs inland to New-castle.

BATHURST.

The first congregation was organized here about 1840, the first minister being the Rev. George Macdonnell, father of the popular minister of St. Andrew's Church, Toronto, and of Mr. George Macdonnell, an active member of Dr. Smith's church in Kingston. After a pastorate of about eleven years Mr. Macdonnell removed to Fergus, Ont., and was succeeded by the Rev. James Murray, late of Wallace, N.S., who was succeeded by the Rev. J. A. Murray, now of London, Ont. The next minister was the Rev. Frederick Home, who was succeeded by the Rev. Peter Galbraith, of the anti-union church, London, Ont. The present minister is the Rev. Samuel Houston, formerly of Calvin Church, St. John, N.B., who was installed into the charge about five years ago, and who has laboured faithfully during these years. The church is a wooden structure in a beautiful situation, and adjoining it is a comfortable manse. The entire buildings are creditable to the Presbyterians of the place. As a summer resort Bathurst is attracting attention, as some families from the west spent the summer here.

MONCTON,

Which was once known as "The Bend," is situated on the Petticodiac river which makes a sudden turn in its course and where is to be seen, at the right time of the tide, the famous bore, the water being forced up the main channel like an enormous mountain wave. The highest tides in the world are found in the mouth of the river. Moncton is also the headquarters for the offices and workshops of the Intercolonial Railway, and where upwards of 300 men are employed. There is also in course of erection a sugar refinery, which is fast approaching completion. It is said that in this building upwards of a million of bricks will be used. In this matter Moncton is ahead of Toronto.

PRESBYTERIANISM.

The church of this denomination is not by any means the "visible church" in the place, but when the stranger makes the acquaintance of the surroundings the church is easily seen, which is a modest wooden structure but comfortably finished inside, and what is best, is well filled with worshippers, and in order to accommodate the increasing congregation, under the pastorate of the present minister, the Rev. Mr. Hogg, side galleries had to be erected, and even now there is not sufficient pew accommodation, and the congregation have wisely secured a lot in a prominent part of the town, where we hope soon to hear of a church being erected which will be an ornament to the place and in some degree in harmony with the beautiful and comfortable manse which they lately erected for their minister.

The congregation has been in existence about twenty years. For a time there was a struggle between

the Old Kirk and Free Church. The former built the church, of which the Rev. William Murray, now of New Carlisle, was minister. When Mr. Murray left, the church came into the hands of the Free Church party, when the Rev. J. D. Murray, now of Buctouche, became the minister, and in 1874 the present minister, the Rev. Joseph Hogg, was settled, when it would appear that the congregation took a fresh start, as previous to this time it had been struggling, aided by the Board, but from that time it pursued an independent course. One cause, no doubt, of the temporal prosperity was that about this time Moncton became the headquarters for the railway, which was the means of adding considerably to the population, which is shewn by the fact that in the former history of the congregation only a small sum could be raised for the support of ordinances, when at present the salary paid to the minister will compare favourably with similar towns in any part of the Dominion, and in addition an excellent new manse has been provided.

ASHURST, N.S.

This is a thriving town in the county of Cumberland, but only across the border from New Brunswick, and near this place is the site of the long talked of Bate Verte canal. Here too is the place where the somewhat celebrated Esther Cox gave such exhibitions of spirit rapping, and other spiritual manifestations, and succeeded in convincing some of the sensible citizens that it was "even so."

Presbyterianism dates back about fifty years, and was represented by the Rev. Dr. Alexander Clark, a native of Kilkea, County Derry, Ireland, and who had for a parish the two border counties, Cumberland, N.S., and Westmoreland, N.B., at one time there were two ministers besides himself, and they formed a Presbytery. They were Reformed Presbyterians of the new school type, and for a length of time were in connection with Ireland, but for many years past were joined to a body of that name in the States. Dr. Clark was a giant in intellect and most abundant in labours. While he lived the late Church of the Lower Provinces was most reluctant to enter the field, though many of the congregations belonged to that Church. Just before the union of 1875, a congregation was formed here under the auspices of the two Synods, in view of the approaching union, and some time after the Rev. Thomas Talloch was settled as the first minister of this congregation. Mr. Talloch resigned last year, consequently at present the congregation is without the services of a stated pastor. Since the organization of the congregation they worship in a public hall but this season a new church is in course of erection, which is expected to be ready for occupation about December, and although the people are not numerous they are spirited and hopeful, and with a suitable minister, quickly settled among them, a career of prosperity is evidently before them. K.

MISSION WORK IN INDIA.

MY DEAR MRS. HARMIE,—Without any preliminaries, I shall at once begin to tell you about my work, as I have been very busy of late trying to be about my Master's business. Yesterday, Miss Rogers having gone to Mhow for a day or two, I took charge of her school, as it is now in very fair working order. I was highly amused at the appearance of one little woman, whose name is Merbuddi. I suppose she has been called after the river of that name. Well, her personal appearance yesterday would have assisted the fortunes of any photographer in Canada, as it was rather more outlandish—pardon the expression—than usual. A blue cloth cap with a hole cut square for the face, and the very faintest possible squint in one black eye; occasionally her skirt falling entirely off, when some one must adjust it for her; but most comical when she sings, as she has not the faintest idea of tune. Yesterday one little girl came without a stitch of clothing upon her, yet we allowed her to remain as we are not very fastidious people. But I must pass on to tell you some of the difficulties we meet with—not an everyday experience I may thankfully say, but still we are so treated sometimes. The other day Venoo came back with great glee and told me that we had been invited to visit a woman who lives opposite Miss Rogers' school, and I was as well pleased as my faithful assistant. I understood that she wished to have her daughter taught, and probably she herself did desire it. I thought I would lose no time, so we went the same afternoon. When we reached the house, instead of being invited to come

in, the woman's husband come out to the ghari. His manner was intended to freeze our zeal, as nothing could have been more polite, and yet so absolutely stony. "What do you want?" he inquired in very good English. I replied that we had been called to teach his daughter. He pretended to look surprised and said he had no daughter, only two sons. Venoo at once told him he had a daughter, because she had seen her. He was by no means abashed at being detected in a falsehood, but said, "Yes, there is one but she is too big to be taught." I very incautiously asked why? I might have known better, but he was equal to the occasion, and said, in a tone intended to dismiss the subject once for all, "We will not discuss this matter as it alludes to our customs." I saw that it was indeed useless, and went away feeling sorry for the stupid prejudice which prevented him from educating his child because she happened to be a girl. However, the same afternoon in the city we received more insulting treatment than ever. A few days before, while visiting Old Indore, a pundit came out of his school and said he wished us to teach his mother but she was not in just then, would we come again? We promised to do so, and the next day tried to find the same school, and the same teacher, but they said he had gone to a village. Some women were standing in a doorway, and when the man said to them that we had come for them they were saucy, and we went away without accomplishing anything. We resolved, however, to try again, and on the day in question went to the foul smelling portion of the city, which has now become familiar ground. In my inquiries for the same school I was brought to a long, low shed, which was evidently a school, but not the one I sought. I asked for the man who had previously called us, and they said his house was quite near and they would shew me. I was followed by a troop of well-grown young Brahmans apparently anxious to direct me, but I soon found out that they wished simply to lead us a wild goose chase, and I refused to follow them. They were exceedingly insolent, and when they saw we had detected the trick they cheered and hooted in the rudest way.

However, I have some cheerful news to give you as well, though I feared I might not be able to say anything about it in this letter. We have now two schools in the bazaar, and two in the villages close by. Miss Rogers, as you know, has one in the camp, and I have now another. Mine, I may say, is likely to be entirely Mohammedan—that is for Mohammedan girls. Miss R.'s is altogether Hindoo. My attempt on behalf of the Parsee girls has not been successful, but I still visit the women in their own homes.

About my school, however—at first I was troubled and worried for fear I would not succeed in getting a woman to call the children. This is a very important point, and to find a woman who will undertake the one hour's work necessary, is by no means easy. I may tell you candidly that I have somewhat shrunk from the Mohammedans, and you will see farther on how I have been rebuked for it. The first woman I engaged was an acquaintance of the one who calls the children for Miss Rogers, and though not very active I thought she might manage. In this I was disappointed. The first morning I went down and neither woman nor children had appeared. I sent for her and she came, only to whine, and ask me where she could find any, etc. At length she went out and brought in two. This was a beginning, and I thought we might try, but one of the girls ran away, leaving me alone with the other. I taught her a few of her letters, then allowed her to go. The next day my old woman did not make her appearance and I searched for another, or tried to do so, that morning. I saw passing a zealous follower of the prophet—zealous because he had dyed his whiskers fiery red, in imitation of Mahomet—and him I hailed, asking his assistance in the matter. To my surprise he volunteered to help me and has faithfully kept his word, getting me a nice woman, so that my school is fairly started. This morning I had four, that is very fair at first. The way I teach them the alphabet is this: I have pasted the Hindoo letters on pieces of pasteboard, and I throw them all down together, after shewing them a letter, then ask them to find that letter for me, and having found it to tell me the name. Then we sew; little pieces of red cloth are given them to hem; thus we have made a beginning and I trust that the effort may be blessed. This afternoon we made our second visit to a house in New Indore. The other day, being the first time we went, we merely ascertained when it