

were originally Presbyterian. But for a length of time they were without religious ordinances, and it is sad to hear elderly people describe their spiritual condition, though sometimes their narratives have a dash of the ludicrous, particularly as they tell of their adventures in endeavoring to have

THEIR MARRIAGES

duly celebrated. To their credit be it said they seemed not to have had any inclination to go to the priest. They commonly went to the neighboring island of Prince Edward, and contented themselves with the manner in which they could get the service done there. But one elderly man, still hale and hearty, told me with some zest, how he had taken his bride all the way from Grosseisle to the East River of Pictou, to have the marriage ceremony performed by Dr. Roy, and doubtless it was done in such a style as compensated him for his extra trouble.

But as to missionary effort of Presbyterians among them, it may be said to have been unknown. Over thirty years ago the Rev. George Sutherland, then of Charlottetown, visited the islands and spent some weeks among them. On his return he published a small pamphlet descriptive of their physical structure and the social condition of the inhabitants;* and advocated the establishment of a Presbyterian Mission in that quarter. But his proposal was treated lightly, and even laughed at. But looking back now I have no hesitation in expressing my conviction, that not only did that church lose an opportunity of honoring her master, but she proved unfaithful to the trust committed to her by her great head, in regard to her own children and their descendants after them. As it is the present generation scarcely know what a Presbyterian service is. The only church which has given them regular ministerial service is the Church of England. She has had for years a succession of missionaries laboring here, among whom there has been manifested much earnestness and self-denial. In particular

THE LAST INCUMBENT

was a thorough Protestant and an earnest,

evangelical worker. He labored not only for the religious improvement of the Protestants, but by preaching and the circulation of the Scriptures, sought the enlightenment of the French Roman Catholic population. It would be a pleasant thing if we had no different tale to tell, and could just pass on wishing them God speed.

But he left two or three years ago and they received a successor so opposite in his principles, that one wonders how they can be ministers in the same church. He hates the name of Protestant, pronounces the church of England as the church of Rome a Catholic church, and scarcely allows salvation to the adherents of other Protestant bodies. Indeed except in regard to the supremacy of Rome it would be difficult to say where his teaching differs from Romanism. As the French accurately describe his position, "He Catoleek all same's we, only not Roman."

The effect of this upon the Romanists has been to confirm them in their errors, and to the Protestants it has been most mortifying, so that now few of them will go to hear him.

More than a year ago they sent strong representations to the Bishop of Quebec, under whose jurisdiction they are, asking his removal, but in reply were told: "You must remember what you seem to forget, that he is sent to teach you, not to be taught by you." Notwithstanding this rebuff they resolved to wait till this summer, which was the time for the Bishop's ordinary Triennial visitation, and then present their case before him in person.

To understand the situation it must be noted that the people do not pay any part of the missionary's salary. This arrangement we think unwise every way. Though they are not rich, they are quite able to pay something, and it is for their spiritual good that they should be trained in the grace of Christian liberality. They themselves regret this state of matters as it leaves them without any voice in the selection of their own minister. But they are required to pay an amount annually to a fund which is being raised for the future support of missionaries. The sum is so trifling that the raising of it would not cost them a moment's anxiety. But at Grosseisle they were so opposed to the incumbent that they would not pay it over to him, though I believe they had it in fund. A letter was then read to them, a

*I desire here to acknowledge my obligations to this work. It contains the fullest information on the islands that I have seen anywhere. Strange to say the last edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica makes no mention of them.