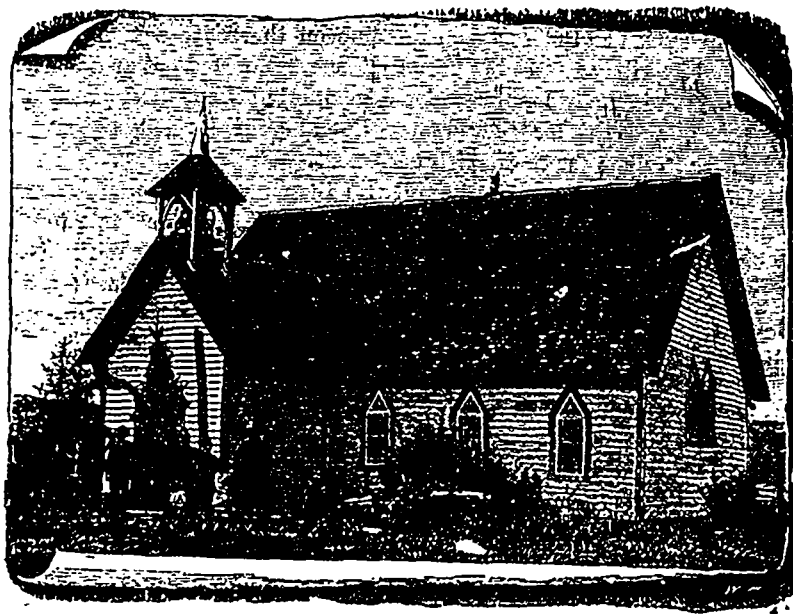




THE LITTLE CURRENT MISSION.

OUR PARISHES AND CHURCHES.

No. 78.—THE LITTLE CURRENT MISSION.

THE church at Little Current is called the Church of the Holy Trinity, and was built through the kindness of a gentleman in England. It is a frame structure built on a foundation of stone, prettily furnished with seats, pulpit, lectern, and chancel furniture by one kind English friend, and capable of seating about one hundred worshippers.

This village, which is now a busy place with four saw-mills and other industries, and a population of five or six hundred white people, was once a settlement of Indian huts and wigwams when we commenced our missionary work here some years ago. There is a pretty rising ground to the east of the present village from which a fine view is obtained of the neighbourhood, the lake and islands and the mountains of the mainland in the distance. On this knoll was built a mission-house for worship, and a school-house for the education of the little Indian children whose parents camped in the neighbourhood. A Church of England missionary came from Manitowaning to hold service whenever he could. This was a good many years ago, when there were no settlers on this large island, no roads and no steamboats; so the missionary travelled on snow-shoes in winter over the deep snow, and in summer he would use the Indian birch bark canoe, which is a frail structure not suited to a journey in stormy weather. Still the missionary was brave and not afraid of difficulties, and much good hard work was done for God and His Church in those days. The Indians told

me of a missionary who walked a long distance on the ice when it was flooded with water after a rain or thaw, and the water would reach to the knees of our poor missionary as he tramped along. However, says the Indian, he did not give in and go back. Sometimes the missionary slept on the ground with nothing but his fist for a pillow, for when on foot a man cannot carry much luggage, neither in a canoe is there room for very much—just a kettle, frying-pan, cup and blanket, and a very small amount of provisions.

Still God did not leave Himself without witness, but blessed the work of His servants, for in the times previous to those of which I

write, when the Indians were converted by the preaching of His ministers before any buildings were erected in Little Current, and the pretty hill of which I speak was all a dense forest, then that success was met with which warranted the establishment of the Mission station, and when the Bishop of Toronto came up in the first steamer that ran on the waters of the Georgian Bay, a very large number of Indians were received into the Church by the rite of Confirmation, and were deemed worthy to receive the Blessed Sacrament of His Body and Blood. Some of the Indians still speak of "that happy day" when they gave their hearts to their Saviour and their God.

For a good many years after this an old gentleman carried on the school and conducted service on the Sunday. He seems to have been beloved by all, and the Indians still speak of him with respect. The missionary was moved from Manitowaning to Sheguiandah, and paid periodical visits to Little Current. About this time, unfortunately, a fire consumed the Mission church and house, and nothing was left but school-houses, which had to answer the purpose of church as well. The Mission was still prospering as an Indian Mission, when the arrival of the white man made a change in the place.

Little Current is situated on the only channel which affords a passage through to the waters of the north channel of Lake Huron to the falls of St. Mary, and thence to Lake Superior, so wharves were built, and as traffic increased and more steamers came on the route a village sprang up—a white village—and the poor Indians were ousted out as a matter of course. A reserve of land was given them, lying about three miles to the westward, and thither they