

campaign. Surely the income of the year will be greatly increased, after having the needs of the work so fully and ably set forth.

AT BATTLE RIVER.

BY E. B. GLASS.

OUR Indians are encouraged to hitch off to the plains after seeding. Shortly after my arrival from Conference in June, the news spread through the camps on the reserve that Joshua, one of the best hunters, had arrived with a genuine buffalo. A small herd had crossed the boundary, been scattered in the chase, and this solitary one became the trophy of our hero. The domesticated tiger turns savage at the taste of blood. The morbid temperament of the Indian was transformed to blood-heat at Joshua's recital of the chase. Give us buffalo north of forty-nine, and we will have to develop into nomadic teachers and missionaries.

A good sign just now is that many substantial Indian dwellings are going up. If shingled roofs are put on, these houses will be inhabited in summer and in winter, and roving habits will be checked in great part, while schools will be better attended.

Yesterday an Indian called at the mission and made the following ingenious speech: "Eventually you will have a good following here; I like to see your work go on, so I wish to build me a larger house to live in, and to hold the weekly prayer-meeting in. Now I think I shall begin right away, *if you can furnish me with tea.*" He is, like many others, a student of human nature, as well as a promising native citizen.

Two weeks ago I preached against the proposed "Sun-dance" that was to be instituted on the next reserve north. I endeavored to make application of Paul's teaching on eating meat sacrificed to idols. At the close I asked the men to remain in. One old man said: "We who may attend the dance will only look on; the responsibility of the dance is with the men who originated it. If you allow us, we will continue to attend church after the dance, but I know half the white men don't believe in religion, for they teach us to swear, a practice we do not know amongst ourselves." Another apologist declared there was to be no cutting of the flesh, but only a praying to the Great Spirit for the children. When asked if he understood that Great Spirit to be the same as the God of the Bible, he replied that he so understood it.

Last autumn, when away from home, a message was sent me to the mission that a child, four miles away, was supposed to be beyond recovery. I reached home at night, but immediately made ready to obey the summons. Upon entering the tent I was surprised to find a leading Indian, naked, painted white, and

plumed about the head, in company with five or six *select men*, sitting in a circle. Their heathen ceremony was just over. Having given up hopes of my arrival that night, they worshipped the Great Spirit in the old wonted way. After a hymn, a talk and prayer, I rode some distance homeward with one of these worshippers, telling him I was surprised to catch such men at heathen ceremonies. He explained that it was nothing marvellous they had performed, but that medicine was administered, a ceremony of prayer followed, and that they all thought it a proper thing to do.

I shall not undertake to theorize or explain these beliefs all away, but merely state that many of our Indians here maintain that this refined heathenism is not inconsistent with the Gospel and Christian profession.

Will our missionaries in other Indian fields tell us their experience with heathenism? More anon.

LIGHT ON THE PRAIRIES.

BY REV. JOHN M'LEAN.

WESTWARD advances the tide of immigration, carrying the flowers and the filth of our eastern provinces and the Old World. Over the fertile fields of Manitoba, the boundless prairies of agricultural and mineral wealth, the massive ranges of mountains, to the shores of the mighty Pacific, friends and foreigners are speeding their way, and we are destined to follow them with churches and schools, to make them a united people in our glorious Dominion. Who shall guide us but the great Master of Life, in whose hands are the destinies of nations and men? God has given to us a blessed heritage in that western country, with its vast areas of excellent land. There is Manitoba, with one hundred and twenty-five thousand square miles; Assiniboia, with ninety-five thousand square miles; Saskatchewan, with one hundred and fourteen thousand square miles; Alberta, with one hundred thousand square miles, and away in the north, Keewatin and Athabasca, with their vast areas of land, well adapted to supply the wants of tens of thousands of people. Thriving agricultural settlements and prosperous villages are scattered over the provisional districts of Assiniboia, Saskatchewan and Alberta, and Manitoba as is already teeming with many thousands of wealthy settlers. Nearly the whole of Alberta is underlaid with a thick bed of coal of excellent quality. It crops out of the banks of several rivers, five and six feet in thickness. Over nearly all of this provisional district the soil is rich; the crops for the past three years have been wonderfully abundant, and the people are contented and happy, save in their desire for increased railroad facilities. In the Macleod district of Alberta, the