

resident governor appointed by the Queen, but all power in effect seems to reside with the Company in Assiniboine. The settlement has now a population of between 500 and 600 souls, and extends in length about fifty miles along the Red River. The farms are narrow, each having a frontage on the river. The houses are close together, and remind you much of a *Côte* in Lower Canada. The land is fertile, the houses comfortable, and the settlers, generally, industrious and thrifty. The crops principally raised are spring wheat, barley, oats, potatoes, turnips, &c. They have plenty of horses, cattle, sheep, &c. There are eighteen wind and two water mills. The population, since it became a settling place for the retiring servants of the Company, has been slowly on the increase. About one-half of the population are Roman Catholics, the other Protestants. The former are mostly Canadians and half-breeds; they have a bishop and several priests and nuns. There is also a bishop of the Church of England, with four clergymen; there are three churches, in one of which the bishop himself regularly officiates, and one station; there is also an academy, which the bishop superintends. The Protestant part of the population were, however, with a very few exceptions, presbyterians originally, and had a minister been sent out, as was at first intended, they would have continued so still. The Church of Scotland has been guilty of a sad neglect, in regard to this colony. The original Sutherlandshire settlers have, almost to a man, remained true to their principles, and that in the face of the most powerful opposition. The Orkneymen who have come in from the service with half Indian families, have inosily fallen in with the Church of England, and, perhaps, in their circumstances, we are not to judge of them too severely—there was no other protestant church here. We can surely sympathise in the struggle between their anxiety for the welfare of their families and their attachment to their mother Church, as also in the somewhat painful position in which some of them, at least, may now find themselves placed, when this Church is at last planted among them; and can we, at the same time, but grieve over the neglect which they and their Highland brethren have suffered. There is one great consolation,—they are attached to that branch of the Church of England, which preaches a sound and free gospel. The adherents of our own Church in the settlement, amount to about 300; they are well-doing, intelligent, moral, and, I trust, many of them, pious people. Many of the old settlers have passed away, and many of the young people had never seen a presbyterian minister till my arrival. Still they continued to hope, and struggle, and pray, that the day they have at last seen should come. Little did they think, when they left their native Kildonan, with the hope that their beloved young minister, the Rev. John Sage, was to follow them in a year, that the first minister of their own whom they were to see was not yet born. To the ministers of the Church of England here they were sincerely attached—to her forms they could never reconcile themselves—and what tended to sour their minds the more on this subject, was the persuasion, that it was owing to an influence connected with her introduction and presence here, that their numerous communications came to nought, and that a minister of their own never set his foot on the soil. It was not till they opened a correspondence with the Free Church, some four years ago, that hope began to brighten; this has issued in my arrival among them, on the 19th September last.

In anticipation of this, a manse had been erected, which, however, has been converted into a temporary church, until a better can be built.—It will accommodate perhaps 250 or 300 persons, and is always well filled, and with a most attentive auditory. We have service forenoon and afternoon, and also a lecture on Wednesday. We have a large and interesting Sabbath school, which existed before my arrival, but was not so

fully attended. There are now ninety-six scholars, thirty-six of whom are young people in my own class. Finding, as I thought, that the congregation was pretty ripe for organization, I proceeded, with the help of a few of the heads of families, whom the people, at my request, appointed to aid me in the work, to examine and admit to the privilege of church membership, such as presented themselves with this desire; and the work having been deliberately brought to a close, we proceeded to the election of a staff of elders. Five worthy men were ordained to that office on Sabbath, 7th inst. Last Sabbath we had the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper dispensed among us. The number of communicants was 44. It was to all of us a solemn day, being the first time in which, according to our simple and scriptural form, that blessed ordinance was ever dispensed here. It was also the first time for the pastor who administered; the first time for the elders who served; and the first time for not a few who sat at the table—among others, two old men—the one 87 and the other 99 years of age; and all this in addition to its own intrinsic solemnity. I trust that the Lord was among us of a truth.—We had the usual services before and after the dispensation of the ordinance.

Steps are now being taken to build a church. The stones are mostly quarried, and the most of them on the spot. The building is to be seated for nearly 400, and is to be fitted to receive galleries when required—thus leaving room for the increase of numbers which we may expect. The church is to be erected on a piece of ground long desecrated by the idolatrous revels of the Indians, and the Sabbath evening sports of some who bore a better name, but whose works were not much better than theirs. This piece of ground will be recollectcd by former residents on Red River, by the name of the Frog Plain. Thus our people have, with great reluctance been obliged to accept, in lieu of the lot given them for a church by the late Lord Selkirk, and which, with the exception of the church-yard, is now in the hands of the Church of England, and even the church-yard they are now also grasping at. The new lot, however, is in the middle of the *parish*, and there the manse and school are already built, and we trust to see the church also rising in due time.

Such is the present state of matters here. After a protracted and painful struggle of 36 long years, the faithful Presbyterians of Red River have seen their toils, in some measure, crowned with success. Their hearts have rejoiced in seeing their own beloved church fully organized among them. For this they feel that deep gratitude is due to the Giver of all good.

Their gratitude also to the Rev. Dr. Burns of Toronto, and the Rev. Mr. Bonar of Glasgow, for their exertions in their behalf, would be to these gentlemen, if they could hear it expressed, an ample reward for their disinterested labours.

To one among themselves also—Alex. Ross, Esq.—they feel that they owe a debt that can never be discharged. This gentleman, for the long period of five and twenty years, has devoted all the influence which superior acquirements, business talents, and social position confer upon him, to the support of their cause—maintaining their rights, conducting their correspondence, and counselling and encouraging them in all emergencies. This gratitude they have endeavoured to shew, by electing him at once to the office of the eldership.

And now their eyes must be turned to the Free Church of Scotland, to send them out, according to her promise, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, to act as their permanent pastor; and if possible, one who can speak intelligibly the Gaelic language, which is still the language of a few.

To any one coming here, I would say, that he will find a compact, intelligent, and affectionate congregation. Old and young eager to receive instruction; and in matters of personal comfort, ready to anticipate his wants. Such I have

found them. Trusting that the Great Head will send them a man of his own choosing, and a rich and saving blessing along with him,

I remain yours, &c.

J. BLACK.

In another letter from Mr. Black, of date December 23, there is the following very affectionate and just tribute to the memory of the late Rev. Mr. Rintoul. After noticing the receipt of letters from friends, he says:

"There is one thing, my Dear Brother, which served much to embitter my joy at the reception of these communications—I allude to the lamented death of my dear and never-to-be-forgotten friend—if I should not rather say father—the Rev. Wm. Rintoul—and I cannot withhold the public expression of esteem in which I held him. Since the first day that a friendless stranger, I set my foot on the shores of Canada, until the moment that I left Montreal on my way to this distant mission field, that man of God was ever my kind and sympathizing friend. He was the first of all our ministers to invite me to his house, and the first, afterwards, to invite me to his pulpit; and never were trials laid before him without meeting with his tenderest regard, nor counsel asked, without being given with that kindness and candour and sound practical wisdom, which ever distinguished him. As a public loss, I regard this as the very greatest which our Church has ever sustained. My heart bleeds for the bereaved widow and family, and for the flock of St. Gabriel Street. Faith almost fails me in looking at the immense blank that death has made—but no, it shall not fail—Jehovah jireh—the Lord will provide."

LETTER FROM ALEXANDER ROSS, ESQ.

The following letter has also been received from Alexander Ross, Esq., dated Red River, 18th December:—

RED RIVER SETTLEMENT,
18th Dec., 1851.

TO DR. R. BURNS, TORONTO:

REV. DEAR SIR,—As the Rev. Mr. Black will be writing you at this time, and be able to give you more correct information on points you may feel an interest in than I can, I shall intrude as shortly as possible on your precious time. Having, however, had occasion to address Mr. Bonar of Glasgow on the subject of some school books, and as I had to say a word or two on our proceedings here since the arrival of Mr. Black, I deem it my duty to put you in possession of what I wrote Mr. Bonar on the subject. Extract from my letter:

"But I cannot let this opportunity slip without noticing how we are getting on since the arrival of our minister, the Rev. Mr. Black, from Canada, in Sept. last. On this subject I am really at a loss for words to express our gratitude. After all our anxious efforts during the last thirty-five years, Providence has, at length, been very kind to us, not only in our getting a minister of our own Church, but in getting a man so highly gifted and suitable in every respect for the place; none could be more so than Mr. Black, none more highly esteemed, more deserving, or that could have given greater satisfaction to the Presbyterian community in the Red River, than he has done. And were it in our power to keep him with us, we would prefer doing so, to the chance of any other man, either from Canada or from Scotland. This is the language of one and all here. We would very willingly forego the Gaelic, and any other consideration in favour of Mr. Black's remaining. He is truly a God-fearing, zealous and indefatigable man; a man according to our heart's desire; a man who has done much already in organizing the church, and gaining the affections of the people here. The first Presbyterian congregation in Red River, met on the 28th Sept. After several introductory steps, five elders were duly elected by the people, on the 26th Novem-