

and who had been taught, by the officers, to read and write.

On the return of Mr. West to Red river, where he arrived, to quote his own words, "after six weeks' buffeting against strong rapids and through stormy lakes," he married Mr. Harbidge, the society's school-master, to a young woman named Elizabeth Bowden, who had recently arrived from England, after being duly qualified to undertake the education of female children. He also opened the new school-house, a building of sixty feet by twenty, as a temporary place of worship; and was much gratified to find that the committee of the Hudson's Bay Company had determined upon educating and providing for the numerous half-breed children, whose parents had died or deserted them; and had requested, in an official communication, that they might be placed under his care and superintendence. Of the Indian boys already under his charge, two had been recently baptized, as being competent to read the New Testament, and to repeat the church catechism and the leading truths of the Christian religion.

"In June, 1823," says Mr. West, "I had the happiness of seeing the accomplishment of the wish so feelingly expressed by the late Mr. Semple, who fell, mortally wounded, near the spot where our buildings are erected. In a letter dated in the year 1815, he observed, 'I have trodden the burned ruins of houses, barns, a mill, a fort, and sharpened stockades; but none of a place of worship, even upon the smallest scale. I blush to say, that over the whole extent of the Hudson's bay territories no such building exists. It is surely high time that this foul reproach should be done away from among men belonging to a Christian nation. I must confess that I am anxious to see the first little Christian church and steeple of wood slowly rising among the wilds, and to hear the sound of the first sabbath bell which has tolled here since the creation.'

"As I was returning, one evening, from visiting some of the settlers, about nine or ten miles below, the lengthened shadows of the setting sun cast upon our buildings, and the consideration that there was now a landmark of Christianity in this wild waste, and an asylum opened for the instruction and maintenance of Indian children, raised the most agreeable sensations in my mind, and led me into a train of thought which awakened a hope, that, in the divine compassion of the Saviour, it might be the means of raising a spiritual temple in this wilderness to the honor of his name. In the present state of the people, I consider it no small point gained to have formed a religious establishment. The outward walls, even, and the spire of the church, cannot fail of producing some

effect on the minds of a wandering people, and of the population of the settlement."

With respect to the usual attendance on the means of grace, it appears that, during winter, the severity of the weather sometimes precluded the settlers from assembling for the purpose of divine worship; but, from the beginning of March till about the middle of June, the congregation consisted, on an average, of from one hundred to a hundred and thirty persons. The sabbath afternoons were devoted to the gratuitous instruction of all who chose regularly to attend; and on these occasions there were generally forty or fifty scholars present, including some Indian women married to Europeans, besides the Indian children on the missionary establishment.

On the 10th of June, Mr. West preached a farewell sermon to a crowded congregation, and having administered the Lord's supper to those who fervently joined with him in praying for the divine blessing to rest upon the missionary who should officiate during his absence, he parted from his flock and the members of the missionary establishment with tears. "It had been," says he, "a long, and anxious, and arduous scene of labor to me; and my hope was, as about to embark for England, that I might return to the settlement, and be the means of effecting a better order of things."

The weather proved favorable on the morning of his departure, and the boat in which he embarked was soon borne down the river, by the current, towards lake Winnipeg. As the spire of the church receded from view, and our missionary passed several of the houses belonging to the settlers, the inmates came out to take leave of their respected pastor, fervently wishing him a safe voyage, and expressing a hope for the increasing prosperity of the colony.

"With light, favorable winds," says Mr. West, "we soon crossed the lake, and reached Norway House; and such is, generally, the quickness of the passage from this point to York factory, that, in the rapid stream of the rivers, a loaded boat will reach the dépôt in a few days, which will take two or three weeks to return, with excessive toil, from the strength of the opposing current. It appears dangerous to an inexperienced traveller to run the rapids in this passage; but it is seldom attended with any serious accident. The men who have charge of the boats are generally experienced steersmen; and it is highly interesting to see them take the rush of water with their boats, and, with cool intrepidity and skill, direct the sweep or steer-oar to their arrival in safety at the bottom of a rapid of almost a perpendicular fall of many feet, or through a torrent of water of a quarter of a mile, or more, in length. Sometimes, however, the boats strike, in the violence of their descent, so as to cause a fracture,