

Mr. Neil is an earnest and effective preacher, thoroughly evangelical in his ministrations. He is modest and genial in disposition, and well fitted to win the confidence and esteem of the young. Pastor and people of Charles Street congregation, to all appearance, have an encouraging and prosperous future before them.

HISTORY OF THE KNOX COLLEGE STUDENTS' MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

(Continued.)

The society appointed, with the concurrence of the Home Mission Committee, as their missionary Mr Samuel Kedey, who had been long resident among the French-Canadians, and who spoke French fluently. Metis, about 200 miles below Quebec, was designated as his field of labour, a portion of his time to be devoted to the English population.

In March, 1851, the same session, the Students Missionary Society called the attention of the Presbytery of Toronto to the spiritual destitution of the Red River settlement. This action was due to a stirring paper on the subject read in the society, the preceding December, by Mr. McDiarmid. In consequence of the society's representations the Rev. Mr. Black, the society's ex-missionary, was selected as the first missionary. Thus the society started the first missionary movement toward Manitoba and the North-West.

Mr. Kedey prosecuted his work at Metis with great success. On one occasion he held a discussion with the priest of an adjoining parish, at which over 400 were present. He established a mission school for the benefit of French-Canadian children exclusively. On Mr. Kedey's return to college in the fall the school was left in the care of a Mr. Page at a salary of £25. He of course worked under the direction of the society. This year the society received some check in its hospital work through Popish jealousy.

In the summer of 1852 Mr. Kedey was again appointed to Metis. Mr. Page, the teacher, died, and was succeeded by Mr. Pasche at a salary of £70 with free house and fuel. Mr. Ferguson, the seignior, a tried friend of the Free Church, had gone to reside in Metis, and readily granted a site for a schoolhouse, and gave permission to cut fire-wood upon his demesnes.

The attention of the society had been directed by one of their number last winter to a settlement of Roman Catholic Highlanders from the island of Uist, then located in the township of Williams, Canada West, and sunk in a state of barbarism and ignorance. As the society could not send a missionary it memorialized the London Presbytery, by whose direction a teacher was sent among them for the summer. Not many weeks after Mr. McDiarmid, a member of the society, began his school, through the influence of the Roman Catholic priest from London the schoolhouse was taken from him. He then met with his pupils in a log house which had only the sides and roof up, the gables being open. There was no door at first, and until Mr. McDiarmid got one cut out, for some days teachers and pupils crept in below the foundation log.

During the summer of 1853 Mr. Pasche continued to act as the society's missionary at Metis. His work was teaching and evangelizing, which he continued during the winter under the society. Letters from Metis were read at each monthly meeting.

This year the Synod granted to the society all the synodical collections for the French-Canadian Missionary Society which were taken in the fields in which divinity students had been labouring, and all confusion as to two collections was avoided.

The difficulty of carrying on such a school at Metis by the society in Toronto soon became apparent. Most of the details had to be left to a local committee of friends. This year, one of the best of the committee, Mr. Dugald Smith, died, and this was a severe blow to the mission. Protestant children were now admitted to board in the school. In consequence of increasing difficulties Mr. Young was deputed to visit Metis, and report upon the mission and its future prospects.

The year was memorable for the visit of Dr. Duff, who addressed the students.

An interesting work was now begun by the society on the Peninsula, now the Island, and carried on for a number of years. The people were of the roughest

class, but the work was successful, and soon a small church was erected.

In 1854 Mr. Samuel Kedey, who was now a graduate, died, and this among other things seemed to precipitate the question, "Shall Metis be considered our field?" Attention was again directed to Essex and Kent, and an encouraging letter was received regarding this field from Rev William (now Professor) McLaren, of Amherstburg. In 1855 Metis was abandoned, the property there sold, and the West adopted as the scene of future operations.

The next question was, Who shall be our missionary? Correspondence was had with Dr. Stewart, of Lehigh, and Dr. D'Aubigne, of Geneva, but with little result. Finally Mr. Vessot was appointed. But he, seemingly according to orders, went to Bayfield, county of Huron, to labour, and was afterward removed to Amherstburg. Vessot seems to have liked Bayfield better than Amherstburg, for we find him paying visits to it, contrary to the society's oft-repeated injunction. In consequence of his refractoriness he was asked to resign, which he did, not, however, before he had asked an increase of salary. The society, in utter weariness, resolved in 1856 to secure a native French-Canadian to be educated for its missionary in Knox College at the society's expense. In the meantime Mr. Fortune, a student of the college, was appointed their missionary, at a salary of £30 and expenses. Two days per week were allowed him for his own studies. Similar regulations appear elsewhere. The society was jealous of the missionary's time.

Oliver Labelle was the youth secured as the ward of the society. The regulations regarding him were the subject of much discussion. He was to study in Toronto in winter, and labour as a missionary during the summer. The society finally agreed to pay him all necessary expenses during his collegiate course, such as board, tuition, clothing and class-books, and, further, agreed to give him \$20 annually as pocket money.

In 1857 correspondence was had with the students of the Free Church at Calcutta, and of New College, Glasgow. Mr. Bald was the society's missionary at Amherstburg.

In 1858 M. Paquette and O. Labelle were sent as missionaries to Amherstburg, but before going were each presented by the society with a French Reference Bible and D'Aubigne's "History of the Reformation." Labelle's health was poor, and in 1859 he was allowed to study at Georgetown Academy during the summer. Mr. Thomas Fenwick presented the society with an oil-painting of John Knox, now adorning the library. In 1861 M. Paquette, the society's missionary, married, and was presented by the society with a family Bible. In this year the United Presbyterian Church had united with ours, and the two societies in Toronto were soon amalgamated, and a new society formed with a new constitution, December 9, 1861. Upon this amalgamation the annual meetings ceased to be public, and the students held them privately. The public meetings were revived in another form in 1883, and now in 1886-7 there will be two public meetings.

The new society had the same troubles as the old with its missionaries, especially with Labelle. His relations to the society became complicated by their permission to him to engage as superintendent of a school for the summer vacation in 1853, under the London Presbytery. He was finally disengaged from the society in 1864, as he persisted in desiring to go to Kankakee, Illinois, as the society's missionary. The society had made a regulation when they began Labelle's education that if he should cease from its employ he should refund the money expended in his behalf. But we hear nothing of this now. It may be safely said that the experiment of the society had not proved a success, and we seem from the history of the society's French work to be forced to the conclusion that it was too difficult for such a body. But it was finally given up with great reluctance and slowness. In February, 1866, Rev. William Reid (now Dr. Reid), in answer to a letter of the society, gave it as his opinion that the society could legally extend its operations to English-speaking people. But a motion looking toward this extension was lost, and it was not until January 15, 1873, that the article limiting the society to French work was finally amended to read "the more neglected portions of Canada." The society had, however, for some years

before this been doing English work as well as French. The fields of these years were East Tilbury (Mr. Paradis), Stephen and Hay in Huron County and Penetanguishene. In 1867 the East End Mission on Queen Street was begun—now the East End Presbyterian Church.

The year 1870 marks the increase of missionaries sent out to six, and from that time there was a steady increase in the number. In 1872 the last French missionary was employed by the society, and the College Street mission was worked by the students. In 1874 the society began work in Manitoba, which it abandoned in 1876-79, but re-entered in 1880 in the person of Mr. James Farquharson, now pastor of Pilot Mound, Manitoba. Work has ever since been successfully prosecuted there.

The society's fields now lie in Muskoka, Parry Sound, Algoma, Manitoulin and Manitoba. Every year several fields through their growth are abandoned to the care of Presbyteries.

General Summary.—Founded in 1845, the society began mission work in 1849. From that time to the present 227 missionaries have been employed, counting all re-appointments; of these twenty-eight were engaged in French work, and twenty-five in Manitoba and the North-West. The society's revenue the second year was \$500; last year, 1885-6, \$3,574.54. The total revenue during the forty-two years of its existence amounts to about \$45,500. Beginning with no missionary, and for fifteen years having only one missionary, it had last year seventeen missionaries, and the year before twenty missionaries. During 1885-6 it had 741 families under its care, with 845 professing Christians and an average attendance of 3,412. Our churches were built in whole or in part.

"The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose."

JOHN A LASCO.*

Dr. Dalton has rendered good service to the Reformed Church by publishing this volume, his aim being to give honour to whom honour is due. He seeks to set forth the wonderful power of grace in the personal history of A Lasco, and to remind the Church of her indebtedness to one of the less conspicuous leaders of the Reformation. His sketches of life in Poland in the fourteenth century, and of the social condition of its people, are exceedingly interesting, and prepare the way for our introduction to the A Lasco family, with its rank and wealth. John A Lasco was born near Warsaw about the year 1499, and educated for the priesthood. To complete his studies he went to Basle, and there came into closest connection with Erasmus, and through him, with the Humanist leaders, graphic sketches of whom we find in these pages. Zwingle, Farel, Oecolampadius, Bucer and others of the Reformers also come before us, but, as yet, it is only the sowing time in A Lasco's soul. He returns to Poland, gives himself faithfully to his priestly work, and dreams of reform of the Church from within. At length, after years of toil and failure, he gives up hope, and resigns his ecclesiastical office, and leaves Poland, Abraham-like—not knowing whither he was to go. A Lasco was an independent reformer, not a mere follower, and so he worked on his own lines, while his subsequent position was the outcome of his inner life. After a time we find him at Embden, in Friesland, where he was appointed superintendent of the Church. As such he completed its reform, sifted its ministry, organized its ecclesiastical constitution, and furnished it with doctrinal standards according to the Reformed, not Lutheran, views.

Such a work was not an easy one. It cost life, it awakened jealousy, and led to opposition, so that eventually A Lasco had to retire to England, though his work in Friesland continued to prosper.

At this point in his career Dr. Dalton stops, the remainder of A Lasco's life being reserved for another volume, which we hope may speedily appear. To Dr. Dalton, his task has been a labour of love, and though performed by him under all the disadvantages of his singularly onerous duties in St. Petersburg, the fire of his own heart burns in almost every sentence. The volume is one that every lover of the Reformed Church should read.

G. D. M.

Quebec.

*John A Lasco. By Herman Dalton, D.D., St. Petersburg; translated from the German by Rev. M. J. Evans, (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1886.)